

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 160

Introduced by Assembly Member Gordon

June 10, 2014

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 160—Relative to sea level rise.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 160, as introduced, Gordon. Sea level rise.

The measure would encourage state agencies to communicate with the public, local, regional, and federal agencies; and nonprofit organizations and businesses, regarding the risks of sea level rise and the development and implementation of adaptive and protective measures to address those risks, and other impacts of climate change. This measure would encourage the Ocean Protection Council to work with the California Coastal Zone Management Agencies, the State Lands Commission, other state agencies, and non-state partners to consider establishing goals and planning principles to help prepare the state's shoreline and coastal community for the impacts of climate change, including sea level rise.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The sea is rising and weather is becoming more
2 extreme. In fact, the county's longest continuously operating gauge
3 of sea level, at Fort Point in San Francisco Bay, recorded a
4 seven-inch rise in sea level over the 20th century; and

5 WHEREAS, As a result of California's changing climate, sea
6 level rise is projected to accelerate during this century. A 2012
7 report from the National Research Council found that the average

1 sea level rise projections for California are an additional six inches
2 by 2030, 12 inches by 2050, and 36 inches by 2100; and

3 WHEREAS, Three quarters of the state’s 38 million people live
4 near California’s 1,100 miles of coastline and San Francisco Bay’s
5 additional 500-mile shoreline; and

6 WHEREAS, Among those affected by sea level rise are large
7 numbers of low-income people and communities of color who are
8 especially vulnerable; and

9 WHEREAS, Coastal waters, waterfronts, bays, ports, harbors,
10 marinas, wetlands, estuaries, riparian areas, and beaches are
11 important environmental and economic resources of California;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Sea level rise and other extreme events threaten
14 water supply and California’s agriculture by causing saltwater
15 intrusion into the state’s freshwater sources, including, but not
16 limited to, the Delta and coastal aquifers; and

17 WHEREAS, Critical existing infrastructure in California,
18 including, but not limited to, roads, hospitals, schools, emergency
19 facilities, wastewater treatment plants, and power plants, and new
20 development on the coast and on the San Francisco Bay is
21 vulnerable to sea level rise; and

22 WHEREAS, Sea level rise threatens public access to the coast
23 and its recreational areas; and

24 WHEREAS, Beaches, wetlands, streams, and other natural
25 habitats that benefit wildlife and communities along the coast
26 require protection, restoration, and enhancement due to the effects
27 of sea level rise; and

28 WHEREAS, The Assembly Select Committee on Sea Level
29 Rise and the California Economy was established last year to
30 thoroughly review the challenges ahead in addressing the expected
31 impacts of sea level rise on the state and its economy; and

32 WHEREAS, The Assembly Select Committee on Sea Level
33 Rise and the California Economy held four hearings throughout
34 the state to examine the effect of sea level rise on various sectors
35 and industries. Topics at those hearings included projected impacts
36 on coastal agricultural, fishing and aquacultural industry, tourism,
37 ports, airports, roads and bridges, and water and power
38 infrastructure, and an examination of the existing authority of state
39 agencies regarding the state’s preparedness and response to
40 anticipated sea level rise; and

1 WHEREAS, State agencies have already begun to address this
2 critical issue. For example, in December 2013, the Natural
3 Resources Agency released a draft of the Safeguarding California
4 Plan for reducing climate risk that identified climate risks to
5 California’s oceans, coastal ecosystems, and coastal resources and
6 provided state guidance for reducing those risks; and

7 WHEREAS, State, local, and private action is needed to plan
8 and design for coastal resiliency and long-term coastal
9 sustainability; and

10 WHEREAS, State, local, and private action is needed to protect
11 public health and safety and public and private coastal and San
12 Francisco Bay infrastructure, ports, public facilities and services,
13 jobs, and economic assets; and

14 WHEREAS, State, local, and private action to protect coastal
15 resources from the impacts of climate change may provide
16 additional public benefits, including, but not limited to, flood
17 protection, improved water quality, and increases in fish and
18 wildlife for food and recreation; and

19 WHEREAS, Although adapting to sea level rise and other
20 extreme impacts of climate change will be expensive, that price
21 will be far lower than the alternative of waiting and reacting to
22 these impacts as they occur; and

23 WHEREAS, Extensive cooperation between state, local, and
24 private entities is needed to adequately respond to the effects sea
25 level rise and climate change; now, therefore, be it

26 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
27 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature encourages the Ocean
28 Protection Council, in its convening role, to work with the
29 California Coastal Zone Management Agencies (the Coastal
30 Commission, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and
31 Development Commission, and the State Coastal Conservancy),
32 the State Lands Commission, other state agencies, and non-state
33 partners to consider establishing coastal climate adaptation goals
34 and planning principles to help prepare the state’s shoreline and
35 coastal communities for the impacts of climate change, including
36 sea level rise, coastal erosion, and extreme storm-related events.
37 The establishment of these goals and planning principles would
38 implement a recommendation from the Safeguarding California
39 Plan to form a state coastal leadership group on sea level rise to

- 1 help guide state activities, enhance agency coordination, and
- 2 facilitate adaptation strategies; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That state agencies are encouraged to engage and
- 4 communicate with the public; local, regional, and federal agencies;
- 5 and nonprofit organizations and businesses regarding the risks of
- 6 sea level rise and the development and implementation of adaptive
- 7 and protective measures; and be it further
- 8 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
- 9 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.